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The Four Estates

The Four Estates (*Li Kadri Virvi*) are the four fundamental divisions of human type in the traditional Aristasian world. It is an idea that the individualistic West in Telluria can find hard to grasp — and even the individualistic West in Aristasia has modified it very radically in practice, while never entirely losing the theory.

In the beginning, there was only one Estate (the Hayana); for maid, being closer to her Primordial wholeness, contained all the elemental possibilities in a single being.

The four Estates mirror the structure of the universe in the microcosm of the social order. Even the division of the single Primordial Estate into four parts mirrors the process of manifestation, in which the four elements proceed out of the single Aethyr. Thus it is natural that the four Estates correspond with the elements. They are as follows:

* Haiela *(approx. pron: "high-ELLa")* : the priestly and intellectual Estate

Correspondences: Air, Winter, North

* Raihira *(approx. pron "rye-HEERa")* : the noble and ruling (also Vikhelic) Estate

Correspondences: Fire, Summer, South

* Magdala *(approx. pron "MY-dla")* : the makers: craftmaids, farmers and merchants

Correspondences: Earth, Autumn, West

* Paccia *(approx. pron: "PAKsia")* : the bonded Estate

Correspondences: Water, Spring, East

Just as there is a fifth element (Aethyr), which is not an element in the usual sense, and a fifth season (Moura) which is not a season in the usual sense and a fifth direction (the Centre) which is not a direction in the usual sense; so there is a fifth Estate which is not an Estate in the usual sense. This is the Stravë (sometimes honorifically termed Hayana)

"Estate" into which no maid can be born. It consists of those who have renounced the world in search of the Ultimate Treasure of the Spirit. Being no longer of the world, they are no longer children of the world's Estates.

The four Estates represent the four fundamental types of maid, just as the four elements represent the four fundamental types of Matter. But as the early-Westrenne saying has it, "in mold is no thyng unmelded". In the material world all things are mixed; and just as Primordial Maid contained all the Estates within herself, so in later days, each Estate in its fullness must contain something of the qualities of all the others. The spiritual maid is also, in her spiritual sphere, a maker (magdalin) and a server (paxit). She may also be a leader, but even if she is not, she must be a warrior (raihirin) against the forces of darkness and against her own lower self. Likewise the Raihirin, to be complete, must be cultivated, intelligent and also spiritual (haiela), she must be mistress of the arts or crafts (magdalin) of statesmaidship or of war, and she must be obedient and bonded (paxit) to her commanders. The head of the Raihira Estate, the Queen or Empress must be paxit to the spiritual authorities, and the Antistita or High-Priestess must, more than any other maid, be wholly paxit to Dea.

It will be noted that the two higher Estates are on the Vertical or Solstitial axis, while the two lower estates are on the horizontal, or Equinoctial Axis. This at once indicates the relationship and the distance between them. There is also a special relationship between the Haiela and the Paccia — the two Estates that look upward — and between the Raihira and the Magdala — the two Estates that look outward.

Thus we begin to see that the four Estates, exist in an elaborate and subtle balance, as is in keeping with their original emergence from the Primordial Oneness of maid.

We may also see the parallel between Aristasia and Telluria. The four Aristasian Estates bear many resemblances to the castes of India and to the Clerics, Nobles, Burgers and Serfs of the Western Middle Ages as well as the similar fourfold division of society in ancient China and the Far East generally. There are also many differences, and these are largely owing to the fact that the Tellurian Iron Age is dominated by the unbalanced Vikhelic principle of opposition and discord, while the Aristasian Iron Age, while still tending toward individualism and the expression of lower possibilities, remains governed by the principle of harmony and coöperation.

So, for example, in the Iron Age (Kali Yuga) in India the three higher castes are called dvija, twice-born because they are initiated or born again, while the lower caste or Sudras are excluded from initiation. In Aristasia the Paccia also are not initiated individually, but each paxit participates in the initiated state of her mistress. Rather than the concept of each soul fending for itself, we have the concept of the

lowest Estate being under a special protection and benefitting from a special spiritual help.

The modern Western Tellurian will immediately want to ask "Is it possible for a person to transfer from one Estate to another?" This is her first question, because her whole individualistic training focuses on the idea of movement, and of being unbound by the past and by one's heredity. The answer is "yes". But it is rare, for in a traditional society the hereditary principle actually works, and souls are generally incarnated into the families most suited to their needs and nature. In the later ages, this principle becomes gradually less effective.

In modern Western Telluria, the natural Estates are in a state of chaos, and it is this chaos that explains much of the modern history of Telluria. We may look back to Henry VIII to see, in many respects, the point at which this chaos began to be made manifest. That king began the full-scale revolt of the "Raihira" against the "Haiela" by declaring himself head of the Church in England and rejecting the "Haiela" authority of the Pope. The following attack on the "Haiela" in the form of the destruction of the Church's monastic organisation is well known. What is less well known is that the Magdala, the third of the twice-born Estates, had their own craft-initiations (the term "the Mysteries" of a craft meant very much more than mere "trade secrets"), which were governed by the guilds. Henry VIII also destroyed the guild system, thus not only eliminating the organisation of the "Haiela" but de-sacralising, and laying the groundwork for the deracination of, the "Magdala". That this caused terrible hardship is also little known. At once the pension funds and "social insurance" of the guilds were confiscated and the "social welfare" structure represented by the monasteries was dismantled. All the money went into the hands of the King's "Raihira" henchmen while both the middle class and the poor were deprived of all security. Thus the revolt of the "Raihira" against the "Haiela" involved an attack by the "Raihira" on all the other Estates.

It is no coincidence that with this disruption of the social thamë, the revolt of the "Raihira" against the "Haiela" was followed, at the beginning of the next century, with a revolt of the "Magdala" against the "Raihira", culminating in the execution of Charles I. The struggle between the "Raihira" and the "Magdala" continued for some time, and by the end of the 18th Century came the first pseudo-revolt of the "Paccia" against both Raihira and Haiela in the French Revolution. We say "pseudo" revolt partly because the proletariat is only a very pale shadow of a true Paccia and secondly because the lowest Estate by its very nature can never govern. So even when the principle of mass- or proletarian-rule becomes dominant, as in "Communist" and "Democratic" states, this is never more than a verbal reality, with the real levers of power being operated by various factions of the degenerate "high-Magdala".

We have spoken at length about this, because is is quite impossible to understand modern Tellurian history without understanding this Confusion of Estates.

In Aristasia Pura, which is governed by the principle of concord rather than discord, no such revolt against the higher Estates ever took place, just as the essentially degenerate-Magdala doctrines of "rationalism" which led to the 17th-century "Enlightenment" are unknown in Aristasia. Nevertheless, "modernism" in Western Aristasia has involved a considerable weakening of the Estate-structure. In many parts of the West most servants are no longer bonded and so do not constitute a real Paccia. The Raihira and the Haiela become largely intermixed as an upper and upper-middle class which also absorbs some of the high-Magdala, while the lower Magdala and upper Paccia tend to form a "lower middle class".

In what way, then, is Westrenne Aristasia different from Western Telluria? The differences are subtle, but nonetheless radical. They spring from the fact that there has never been any "ideological" justification for the Confusion of the Estates. It is a thing that Westrennes acknowledge to have happened, and on the whole regard as regrettable, at least in principle, while also realising that it makes possible their current Westrenne way of life. Ideas like Democracy and Socialism (invoked by the Tellurian "high-Magdala" in order to use the "Paccia" as a smokescreen for its economically-based political and social control, which it cannot otherwise justify) have never had any currency. Government by the Raihira, headed by hereditary Queens and guided by spiritual authority still prevails. Because government is relatively minimal, and questions of control and power are less important to a feminine people, the raw "tests of power" between the Estates that inevitably led to chaos in Telluria have simply never happened, and the West remains a curious mixture of traditional and modern ideas and actualities. Because of this, it has trodden paths in many ways similar to those of the Tellurian West, while never losing its roots in tradition, or making the radical breaks with Fundamental Order (thamë) that a Vikhelic society found itself more or less forced into making.

The idea of the Estates continues to underlie much of Westrenne thinking: and even though the actuality has slipped into something that is superficially rather more like the pre-Eclipse Tellurian class system, one confuses it with that class system at one's peril. Only one who was born in Aristasia can truly appreciate the nuances of its social system, but as Tellurian subjects of the Empire, we grow continually into a system that is very different from anything that exists in Telluria, and, for all its imperfections, is much more beautiful.

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